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CIA Trains Police

The CIA has been instructing 50 policemen from twelve city police forces during the last few years. Such subjects as the use of explosives, the detection of wiretaps, the organization of intelligence files made up the curriculum. Where else would these local policemen receive a better brand of training?

Nevertheless, a congressman by the name of Koch has protested. He claims that the CIA program represents a "most serious disregard of the law." He says he is going to ask for an investigation by the senate judiciary subcommittee on constitutional rights. Since when is teaching a policeman how to detect a wiretap of concern to a senate committee? What is wrong with the foremost experts in the world on foreign weapons explaining some of their knowledge and experience to policemen? Perhaps it is naivete, but we would think that this is exactly what many policemen should learn. We also think that they should know something about the organization of intelligence files. We always ought to be looking around for further instruction on how to detect explosive devices.

The former head of the CIA, Richard Helms, considers it perfectly legitimate for his old agency to help out domestic police forces in this way. He doesn't see anything contrary to the law which forbids the CIA from involving itself in law enforcement activities within the United States. After listening to Mr. Helms, Senator Fulbright observed, "I don't think there is any great harm done,

but I'm against the whole concept of the CIA getting involved in an innocuous way in police business."

We would point out there is some difference between the business of police investigation and the instruction of policemen. We would hope that all responsible citizens and responsible agencies of government feel an obligation that police instruction be of the highest caliber. This Koch vendetta doesn't make any sense.

In the days when John Edgar Hoover was running the FBI, both he and that agency were jealous of the CIA. The FBI was always proud of its police academy. The police graduates of FBI training represented a communications achievement between the local constabulary and the agency.

Local policemen who learned something about weapons, files and explosives at the FBI academy may want to know something about foreign techniques. Where besides the CIA can you go?

Since the congressman brought the subject up, we would not only affirm CIA explosive courses one and two; we would suggest further that some of the CIA experts might benefit from a reciprocal arrangement by which their talented might attend the local police training schools of the major municipalities in the United States. Although the CIA is 25 years old, never has it given any evidence that it is too old to learn. It probably would accept quickly a few local police invitations.